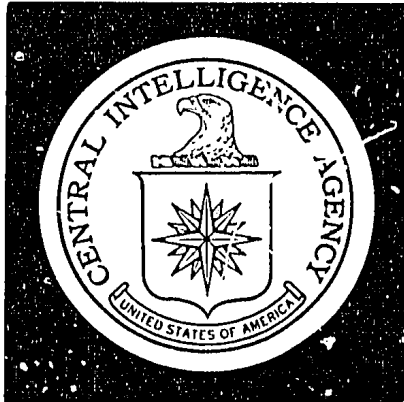


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**Secret**



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Report

*India: The Congress Party and the Opposition*

**Secret**

12 July 1971  
No. 1718/71

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
12 July 1971

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

India: The Congress Party and the Opposition

Introduction

Although four months have passed since national elections were held and parliament is now in the midst of its second post-election session, India's opposition parties remain in disarray. Prime Minister Gandhi's electoral sweep--350 out of 518 parliamentary seats--all but eliminated from national politics several once-major parties. The opposition is still reeling, and many political parties are enmeshed in postmortem wrangles. Moreover, the long-run outlook for most of the opposition offers little cause for optimism. This does not mean that all opposition is about to fade away, but for the foreseeable future it is unlikely that any other party will be able to offer a significant challenge to the Ruling Congress.

Most of the opposition parties are searching--generally without success--for ways to recoup their losses. Many essentially conservative political leaders have recommended to their parties an approach as "progressive" as the prime minister's, but this policy has failed to have much impact. Other politicians, eager to blame their partners in electoral alliance for their own errors, propose a "go-it-alone" strategy, but this ploy would appear to have little chance of improving the position of their parties. Mrs. Gandhi should easily be able to head off small parties that try, by themselves, to compete with the greater financial and political resources of the Ruling Congress.

*Note: This report was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated within CIA.*

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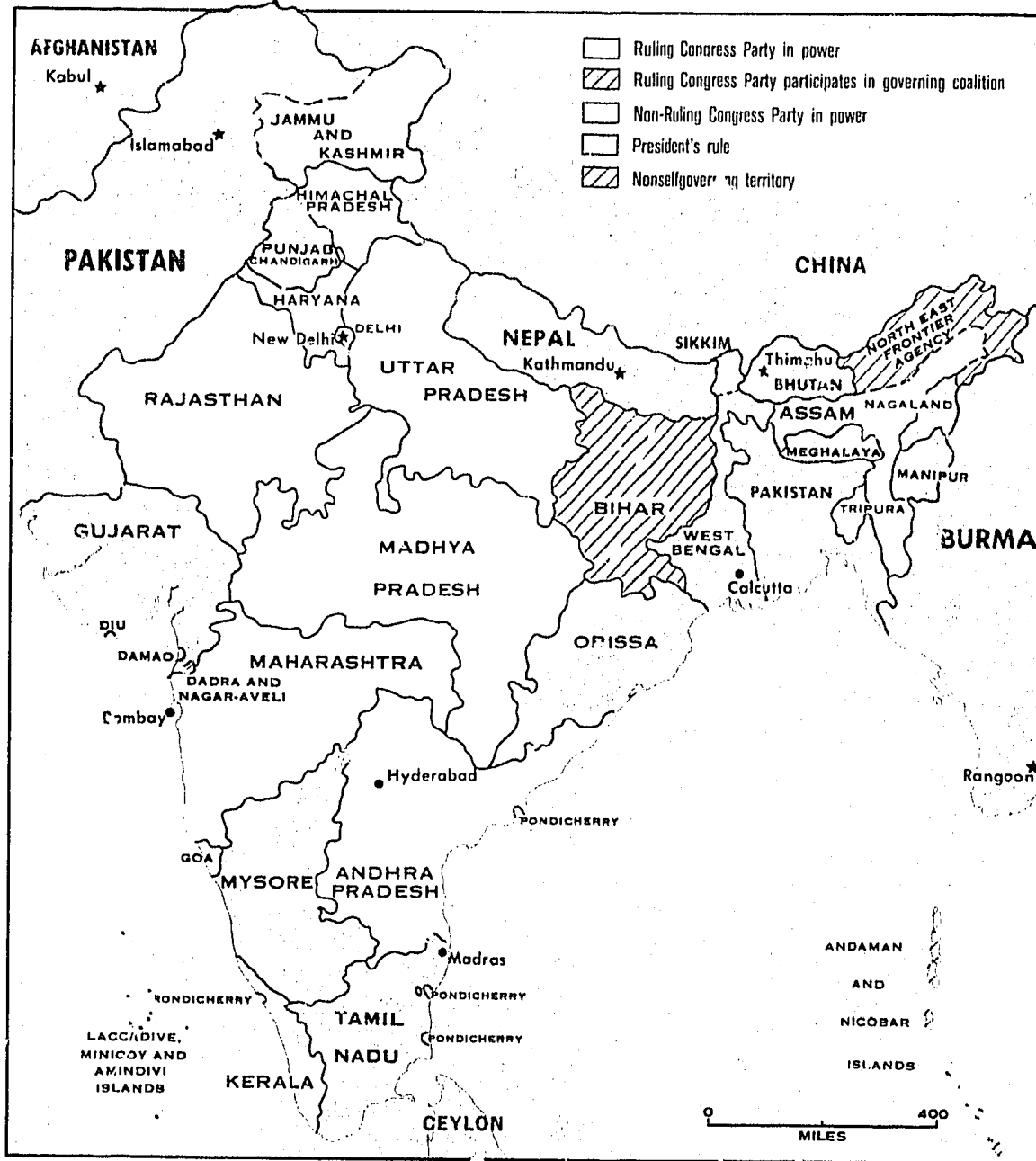
Mrs. Gandhi rode to power, however, on a promise to implement "progressive" measures that would instill new vigor into the Indian economy and provide the Indians a better life. Because she will be unable to deliver on all her promises, she runs the risk of reaping a harvest of frustrated expectations. Unless she makes the visible progress necessary to keep the people with her, radical parties of the left and communal and nationalist parties on the right will gain new adherents. Mrs. Gandhi is aware of the problems ahead and will continue to employ tactics to meet her special needs. Her opponents are in no position to prevent her from accomplishing her goals, but the future of her government may ultimately be more affected by events outside the borders of India--for example, by developments in the civil war in East Pakistan--than by purely local considerations.

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## The Political Situation in India



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